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LETTER DATED 21 JUNE 1996 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 21 June 1996, which I have received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

I would appreciate your bringing it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI

96-15724 (E) 250696 260696

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Annex

Letter dated 21 June 1996 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1031 (1995), I attach the seventh report on the operations of the multinational implementation force (IFOR). I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

We have now passed the mid-point of the IFOR mission and many successes have been achieved over the past six months. I welcome the considerable achievements to date, including the recent signature of the Arms Control Agreement. The peace remains fragile, however, and as my visit last weekend to the area confirmed, there are still many hurdles to overcome. The period leading up to the elections, a significant milestone along the path of democracy and reconstruction, will be crucial. With this in mind it has been agreed that IFOR will be maintained at approximately its current force level until after the elections and will retain its overall capability until the expiry of its mandate in December.

IFOR will continue with its primary mission of monitoring and enforcing compliance with the provisions of the military annex to the Peace Agreement. Within its capabilities, it will also continue to contribute to, and provide support for, the work of the civil agencies operating in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and will play its part in encouraging cooperation and confidence building between the parties. Ultimately, however, they themselves have prime responsibility to bring a lasting peace to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

(Signed) Javier SOLANA

Appendix

Seventh Report to the UN Security Council
on IFOR Operations

IFOR Operations

1. The multinational implementation force (IFOR) comprises approximately 54,000 personnel deployed in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, from all the NATO nations and from 16 non-NATO contributors. The most recent enhancement was provided by Egypt, whose contribution was transferred to IFOR control on 25th May. Offers from four additional non-NATO nations are pending. IFOR air assets continue to provide the capability required to secure the air space, defend and support IFOR ground forces, provide support to civilian agencies within mission capabilities, and to monitor compliance. IFOR maritime assets also remain deployed in support of IFOR.

2. During the reporting period IFOR has continued to carry out its primary task of implementing the military aspects of the Peace Agreement with its efforts focused mainly on the inspection and verification of barracks/cantonments and air defence weapons storage sites. IFOR continues to ensure a secure environment in which civil organizations can operate, and, subject to fulfilment of its primary military mission, is now providing increased support to the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Peace Agreement. Ground and aerial patrols of the Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL) and the Zone of Separation (ZOS) have been maintained, as has the monitoring of de-mining operations. As the Freedom of Movement (FOM) issue is paramount to the success of all civilian activities in theatre, IFOR is patrolling more widely throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina to assist in facilitating civilian FOM throughout the country.

3. IFOR maintains the robust capabilities and Rules of Engagement, which enable it to defend itself effectively and to provide protection for others involved in implementing the Peace Agreement. Over the past month there have been restrictions of movement which have increased tension on some parts of the IEBL and which have resulted in orchestrated demonstrations and IEBL crossings. Militarily, the situation has been stable. Mines remain the greatest risk to IFOR and others. Incidents continue to cause casualties among IFOR personnel and local people, and underline the importance of increasing mine clearance and minefield marking activities. The in-theatre Mine Action Centre in Sarajevo was handed over from IFOR to the UN on 20th May. It is intended that the Centre will control and direct all mine-clearing operations throughout the country.

4. Close liaison and coordinated planning has been maintained between IFOR and the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia (UNTAES). The Operational Plan (OPLAN) to provide Close Air Support to UNTAES when required is in place and coordination and cooperation with UNTAES in the development of an Emergency Withdrawal OPLAN is also underway.

Cooperation and Compliance by the Parties

5. Since D+120 (18th April), IFOR has monitored significant progress in the cantonment of the forces and heavy weapons of the former warring factions, or their demobilization. By D+180 (17th June) there was general compliance with the requirement to move declared heavy weapons to authorised storage sites. Similarly, over the past month, significant progress has been registered in the withdrawal of air defence (AD) systems. However, all sides continue to try to gain local tactical advantage and IFOR continues to find weapons not declared or outside authorized storage sites. Following D+180, any heavy weapons found outside authorized cantonment sites will be confiscated and destroyed. Demobilisation will continue after D+180 and is not expected to be completed until approximately D+270.

6. There may be a few individuals whose continued presence constitutes a lack of compliance with the Foreign Forces provisions of the Dayton Agreement, and IFOR continues to monitor the situation. Some prisoners are also still being held.

Cooperation with the High Representative, the OSCE and other International Organizations

7. IFOR remains committed to assisting the successful completion of civilian implementation tasks contained in the Peace Agreement and its Annexes and it will continue to build on the good cooperation established with the Office of the High Representative and the many civil agencies. Over the past month, IFOR support to the Office of the High Representative has included staff support and liaison, and communications and transportation support.

8. IFOR will provide all possible support, within its capabilities and without prejudice to its primary tasks, to the OSCE's election preparations, and will give priority to election support over support for other civilian tasks, especially during election day. IFOR's main contribution to the election process will be the creation of a secure environment through the provision of area security, the continued patrolling and opening of roads, and the concentration of IFOR forces, where necessary, at potential confrontation points. In addition, IFOR will continue to work closely with the OSCE in providing other forms of support, such as planning, logistics, transportation and communication support. in doing so, IFOR will maintain an even-handed approach and will not provide direct support for political candidates.

9. IFOR continues to support the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), by carrying out extensive aerial and ground surveillance of alleged mass grave sites to which the ICTY has given priority status and by providing security and logistical support to ICTY teams investigating these sites. Recent examples are support to the investigations in Central Bosnia-Herzegovina and near Srebrenica. IFOR also provides other transport and logistical support for the ICTY's responsibilities in respect of indicted war criminals. On 13th June, two persons indicted for war crimes and handed over from the Bosnian Government to the ICTY were transported from Sarajevo to the Hague, at the request of the ICTY.

10. To date, IFOR has undertaken 2970 civil action projects, including over 300 civil construction projects, 925 medical assistance projects, 931 instances of humanitarian aid distribution and is currently involved in over 600 additional projects.

Future Force Levels and Capabilities

11. Given the magnitude of the tasks ahead, IFOR will be maintained at approximately its current force levels until after the elections, and will retain its overall capability until December, when its mandate comes to an end.